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AJ Henderson - Georgia Southern Athletics

Koning Reaches Second In All-Time Eagles Wins

By Chris Little
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In 2015, the Georgia Southern men's tennis program hired its ninth head coach to lead the team. Now in his sixth season, Sander Koning has amassed the second most wins in Eagles history.

On Feb. 8, 2020, coach Koning earned his 76th win as Eagles head coach in a 7-0 win over USC-Upstate to surpass Justin Miles (2003-11) for the number two spot in all-time wins for the program. Miles was 75-122-1 in his nine seasons.

It feels great. Obviously, there have been some good coaches around here, so for me to be second all-time is an awesome feeling. I think it's a testament to the players I've had and what they've been able to do here.

Sander Koning



While GS is Koning's first stint as a head coach, he is far from a rookie in the sport.

Before becoming an Eagle, Koning served as assistant men's tennis coach at Indiana and Old Dominion.

As a student-athlete, Koning competed at Clemson University at the No. 1 singles and No. 1 doubles positions. A two-time All-ACC Player (2003, 2005), Koning was also a four-time selection to the All-ACC Academic Team (2002-06). A sport marketing major, he was a member of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and was selected as the men's tennis team captain in 2005-06.

Koning has also played professionally and earned ATP points in professional club tennis competitions and tournaments.

With 14 matches remaining in the 2020 season and now up to win No. 78, Koning will likely increase his standing, but he will have a long way to go to reach the number one spot.

Joe Blankenbaker coached the Eagles men's tennis team from 1975-90 and again from 1992-97. In his 21 years, Blankenbaker lead the team to a 332-139 record and only had one losing season. In seven of his seasons, his teams won 20+ games including his best squad of 1981 that went 25-4.



Former Eagles Head Coach Joe Blankenbaker

Sander is a great coach. He played tennis in a great program and is well respected in college tennis circles. Hopefully, we can keep him at Georgia Southern for many years to come.

Joe Blankenbaker

In 2018, Koning was named Sun Belt Co-Coach of the Year with rival head coach Jonathan Wolff from Georgia State. Under coach Koning the Eagles were able to defeat Georgia State 4-3 for the first time in the last 15 meetings that season.



In my six years, I have been trying to establish a culture for the program. It all comes down to the players buying into that culture and I feel like they have been. You see every year how new guys step up and transfer that culture to the younger players. Everything we're doing is a continuous process of getting this program better. My hope is that this trend continues and that the success grows along with it.

Sander Koning



Well obviously, there's a guy ahead of me by a good bit. When we have our alumni events and I talk to the former players, they always talk about coach Blankenbaker and what he was like and what he did here. They really loved him for more than just the wins. I think that's one of the best attributes you can have as a coach.

Sander Koning